

FE2D 04 (CFACSC4) Deliver Customer Service to Difficult Customers

This Unit has the following Elements:

- C4.1 Recognise when customers may be difficult to deal with.
- C4.2 Deal with difficult customers.

Unit Summary

This Unit is part of the Customer Service Theme of Handling Problems. This Theme covers the behaviours, processes and approaches that are most effective when handling customer service problems. Remember that customers include everyone you provide a service to. They may be external to your organisation or they may be internal customers.

Many organisations have a significant proportion of difficult customers. Your customer's attitude may be difficult simply because they believe that a threat or problem exists before they contact your organisation. They may become difficult or even aggressive when they discover that their expectations are not going to be met by your organisation. They may be very concerned or nervous about the outcome of dealing with your organisation. In either case, they are difficult to deal with and need your understanding. This Unit is about dealing directly with these customers and trying to reach a resolution that satisfies everybody or at least reduces the risk of dissatisfaction. You should choose this Unit only if you recognise the content as applying to a reasonable proportion of your exchanges with customers. Do not choose this Unit if it will be hard to find evidence because you only occasionally deal with a difficult customer.

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C4.1 Recognise when customers may be difficult to deal with

Performance Criteria

You must consistently:

- C4.1.1 Recognise types of customer behaviour that are difficult to deal with.
- C4.1.2 Identify aspects of your organisation's services or products that make it difficult to deal with customers.
- C4.1.3 Identify the signs and signals that indicate a customer may be difficult to deal with.
- C4.1.4 Put yourself in your customer's position and see the situation from their point of view.
- C4.1.5 Identify reasons why your customers may be behaving in a way that is difficult to deal with.
- C4.1.6 Recognise the limits of difficult customer behaviour that your organisation will tolerate.
- C4.1.7 Identify things that you may do or say that will provoke difficult responses from your customer.

C4.2 Deal with difficult customers

Performance Criteria

You must consistently:

- C4.2.1 Listen patiently to what your customer wants to tell you.
- C4.2.2 Use direct and factual questions about your customer's feelings and what has happened to identify what might satisfy them.
- C4.2.3 Check your understanding of your customer's concerns by describing your view of the situation and options that might be available.
- C4.2.4 Express empathy with your customer without necessarily admitting fault on the part of your organisation.
- C4.2.5 Give clear statements or explanations of your organisation's position.
- C4.2.6 Agree a way forward that balances customer satisfaction with the needs of your organisation.
- C4.2.7 Enlist help from colleagues if options for action are outside of your authority.
- C4.2.8 Summarise clearly actions to be taken and reasons for those actions to complete the customer transaction.
- C4.2.9 Advise your manager or the appropriate colleagues if your customer is likely to re-open the matter with them.
- C4.2.10 Take any necessary action to protect your own safety or that of other customers or colleagues from a difficult customer.

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Knowledge and Understanding for the whole Unit

To be competent at delivering customer service to difficult customers you must know and understand:

- C4a The types of customer behaviour that you personally find difficult to deal with.
- C4b Reasons why some aspect of your organisation's services or products may provoke difficult behaviour from customers.
- C4c Reasons why your customer's own actions may cause them to behave in a way that is difficult to deal with.
- C4d The meaning of having empathy for a customer's feelings.
- C4e Who can be asked for help when dealing with a difficult customer.
- C4f The difference between assertive, aggressive and passive behaviour.
- C4g The importance of not simply quoting your organisation's rules and procedures to counter your customer's difficult behaviour.
- C4h Your organisation's limits of what will be tolerated from difficult customers before the transaction or relationship is closed.
- C4i The importance of giving your manager or the appropriate colleagues notice of any further approaches from a difficult customer.
- C4j When it might be necessary to take action to protect your own safety or that of other customers or colleagues from a difficult customer.

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Evidence Requirements

- 1 Your evidence should be collected when carrying out a real job, whether paid or voluntary, and when dealing with real customers, whether internal or external to the organisation. However, for this Unit, evidence collected in a realistic working environment or a work placement is permissible. Simulation is not allowed for any performance evidence within this Unit. *(Guidelines for a Realistic Working Environment can be found in the Assessment Strategy for Customer Service S/NVQs at Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 — July 2010)*
- 2 You may collect the evidence for the Unit through work in a private sector organisation, a not-for-profit organisation or a public services organisation.
- 3 You must provide evidence that shows you have done this over a sufficient period of time with different customers on different occasions for your assessor to be confident that you are competent.
- 4 You must provide evidence of delivering customer service to difficult customers:
 - a during routine delivery of customer service
 - b during a busy time in your job
 - c during a quiet time in your job
 - d when people, systems or resources have let you down.

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Notes/Comments

The candidate has satisfied the assessor and internal verifier that the performance evidence has been met.

Candidate's signature _____ **Date** _____

Assessor's signature _____ **Date** _____

Internal verifier's signature _____ **Date** _____